

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 177

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 18363

FOLG SENT AS ACTION DELHI INFO BOMBAY MADRAS DTD  
DEC 20 RPTD FOR YOUR INFO.

QUOTE.

C O N F I D E N T I A L CALCUTTA 3154

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IN  
SUBJ: POLITICAL CONTEST IN WEST BENGAL

1. FOLLOWING OUSTER OF MRS. SATPATHY AS CHIEF MINISTER OF  
ORISSA AND SUMMONING OF ALL PROMINENT WEST BENGAL POLI-  
TICIANS, INCLUDING CHIEF MINISTER RAY, TO NEW DELHI OVER  
LAST FEW DAYS, ALL OBSERVERS EXPECT THAT REMOVAL OF RAY  
IS JUST A MATTER OF TIME, AND PROBABLY ONLY A FEW DAYS AT  
THAT. SUCCESSION QUESTION DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN  
SETTLED, AND ALL EXPECT THAT THERE WILL BE A FAIRLY LONG  
PERIOD OF PRESIDENT'S RULE BEFORE A NEW CHIEF MINISTER  
IS INSTALLED.

2. IN THE MEANTIME BACKERS OF RAY, LED BY P.R. DAS MUNSHI  
AND L.K. BOSE, HELD MEETINGS OVER THE WEEKEND TO SHOW  
THEIR SUPPORT FOR HIM. ACCORDING TO THE STATESMAN, DEC-  
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EMBER 19, AT A WELL ATTENDED MEETING IN HOWRAH ON DEC-  
EMBER 18 PRO-RAY LEADERS SAID "THEY WOULD CONTINUE THEIR  
FIGHT AGAINST THOSE WHO WERE 'SCRAMBLING FOR POWER IN  
THE STATE.'" SAME GROUP HELD MEETING ON DECEMBER 19 IN  
KALNA (BURDWAN DISTRICT), BUT SINCE FRIDAY EVENING THERE  
HAS BEEN STRICTER CENSORSHIP OF MATTERS RELATING TO

POLITICAL CONFLICT IN WEST BENGAL, SO THAT DETAILS OF THESE MEETINGS ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN PRESS.

3. AT CPI YOUTH RALLY HELD IN CALCUTTA ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, TO PROTEST AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT AND HIGH PRICES MUCH EMPHASIS WAS ALSO APPARENTLY GIVEN TO ATTACKS ON THOSE ATTEMPTING TO REMOVE RAY. ACCORDING TO REPORT IN DECEMBER 19 KALANTAR, RALLY ADOPTED RESOLUTION STATING, "WHEN THIS STATE IS REALLY IN A SERIOUS CRISIS ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE TO CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT IN A CONSPIRATORIAL WAY, IGNORING DEMOCRATIC METHODS AND NORMS AND THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE." CPI LEADER INDRAJIT GUPTA IS QUOTED AS CHARGING THAT "THE IMPERIALIST REACTIONARY CLIQUE IS TRYING TO RE-ENACT IN INDIA THE EVENTS OF CHILE AND BANGLADESH. THE IMPERIALISTS, REACTIONARIES AND JOTEDARS ARE TRYING TO INSTALL MEN OF THEIR CHOICE IN POWER."

4. COMMENT--PEOPLE WE HAVE TALKED TO IN LAST FEW DAYS--MOSTLY FROM CALCUTTA BUSINESS CLASS--ARE NOT PARTICULARLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT CHANGE IN STATE ADMINISTRATION. EVEN IF HIS ACHIEVEMENTS WERE LIMITED, RAY HAS BEEN SYMPATHETIC TO BUSINESSMEN AND HAS TRIED TO ASSIST THEM IN DEALING WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. HE HAS ALSO BROUGHT NEEDED STABILITY TO WEST BENGAL. EXAMPLES OF PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM CURRENT STRUGGLE WITHIN WEST BENGAL CONGRESS WERE RELATED TO US BY BANKER WHO SAID THAT TWO OF HIS CLIENTS WERE HAVING LABOR PROBLEMS DUE TO INTER-UNION RIVALRY, IN ONE CASE BETWEEN TWO CONGRESS UNIONS. STATE LABOR MINISTER SAID HE COULD DO NOTHING TO SOLVE  
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PROBLEM UNTIL CURRENT POLITICAL CONFLICT SETTLED.

5. WE ALSO SENSE GENERAL UNHAPPINESS ON THE PART OF ALL GROUPS AT THE WAY SANJAY IS SO BLATENTLY INTERFERING IN STATE POLITICAL AFFAIRS. EVEN THOSE WHO MIGHT BE ATTRACTED BY SANJAY'S STATEMENTS ON ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MATTERS AND WHO ARE STILL SYMPATHETIC TO MRS. GANDHI, RESENT HIS ACTIVITIES IN TRYING TO REPLACE RAY. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT AT THIS TIME SUCH RESENTMENT WILL LEAD TO ANYTHING MORE SERIOUS THEN WHISPERED GRUMBLING.  
LIEBOWITZ

UNQUOTE  
SCHNEIDER

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